

Urbanová, Ludmila

[Jones, Daniel. English pronouncing dictionary. Edited by Peter Roach and James Hartman]

Brno studies in English. 1997, vol. 23, iss. 1, pp. 183-184

ISBN 80-210-1711-2

ISSN 1211-1791

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/104333>

Access Date: 17. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

of equivalence in translation from a minimal to a maximal level and points out that (p.114) 'the term „equivalence“ can never be understood in its mathematical sense of complete identity. Translating can only reach a 'functional equivalence' or a 'practical communicative equivalence'.'

The whole book is written in a very lucid style and the accompanying examples are both witty and instructive, showing the author's wide-ranging linguistic knowledge and experience. There is no doubt that translators and linguists generally will find the book readable, interesting and useful.

Eva Golková

Daniel Jones, *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, 15th edition, eds. Peter Roach and James Hartman, Cambridge University Press 1997, 559 p.

Eighty years after the publication of the first edition of Daniel Jones' *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (first published by J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. 1917), which has gained wide popularity together with a high reputation of the London School of Phonetics founded by Jones and his followers, the English-speaking public is enriched with a newly-revised, updated, extended and computer-based 15th edition of the highly appreciated indispensable work, having the models of current British English and American English pronunciations as its base. Over 80,000 entries (compared with over 59,000 words in the 14th edition) form the body of the dictionary. The 15th edition is a joint effort of Professor Peter Roach from the University of Reading and Professor James Hartman from the University of Kansas.

The original concept of Received Pronunciation, which has been widespread and indicative of social status rather than function, was considered to be 'imprecise' even by A.C. Gimson, editor of the extensively revised 14th edition (J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, London, Melbourne and Toronto 1977). Consequently, this controversial label has been completely abandoned in the present edition. 'The time has come to abandon the archaic name Received Pronunciation' (Introduction,v). Instead, the concept of BBC English drawing on the pronunciation of BBC newsreaders and announcers, whose pronunciation is based on a reasonable consensus and has no evident social class connotations, has been adopted as a 'more broadly-based and accessible model accent for British English' (Introduction,v).

The major and most striking innovation is the simultaneous presentation of the American English counterpart reflecting the type of pronunciation termed General American, which is neither markedly social nor regional in character. The two varieties of Present-Day English are thus treated as equal in importance within the English-speaking world.

Much desired recognition of the equal status of British and American English embodied in the 15th edition of Daniel Jones' *English Pronouncing Dictionary* has been previously done justice to by J.C. Wells' *Longman Pronouncing Dictionary* (first edition 1990), and much earlier by J.Windsor Lewis' *A Concise Pronouncing Dictionary of British and American English* (Oxford University Press 1972).

As stated in the Introduction, the choice of pronunciation, or pronunciation variant(s), has been determined by intuition and careful observation of English pronunciation, especially broadcast English. Thus the language of mass media of communication, namely the language of broadcasting, has been chosen as the representative of present-day pronunciation, bridging, by its true nature, the diversity of ways of pronunciation with regard to the social and regional spectrum. Another interesting feature is the implementation of the distinction between common and uncommon words; whereas the former category is generally connected with an informal style of speaking, the latter category of words is pronounced more carefully. The level of formality is a crucial indicator of means of language in use in general. Therefore this distinction at the level of the sound makes an important contribution to the degree of pragmatic awareness of the users of the dictionary.

Standard accents chosen for British and American English used by educated speakers of Eng-

lish (Introduction, vi) are the basic criteria for the choice of the pronunciation (or pronunciation variants) in the novel version of the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*.

A few technical details connected with the making of the dictionary should be given a mention here:

Syllable division reappeared in the 15th edition, after being abandoned in the 14th edition. This notion is fully justified, since syllable division is understood as an appropriate supportive characteristic useful for foreign learners of English. At the same time this thoughtful procedure can be best utilized for purposes of automatic tagging.

The transcription used in the dictionary is phonemic; phonetic details are usually not implemented. The fundamental requirement placed on the presentation of pronunciation is that of simplicity, in harmony with the 'realist' tradition established by Jones (Introduction, viii).

While pronunciation is subject to constant changes, a frequent change of transcription is felt to be an obstacle. Therefore no major changes in the transcription system have been introduced in the present edition. Since the majority of foreign words are Anglicized, very few symbols different from the inventory of English phonemes are utilized.

Stressing ranks among one of the most critical issues in making a pronouncing dictionary because the stress patterns in polysyllabic words sometimes vary, also due to the context. Therefore in such instances the possibility of stress-shifts has been marked, which is very useful for the orientation of the foreign learner.

One of the basic differences between the British accent and the American accent is the treatment of /r/. British English is non-rhotic, whereas the American accent is rhotic (*r* is pronounced when found in spelling). For British accent, potential uses of /r/ in such positions, especially in the word-final position, are indicated by a superscript /r/. This occurs only in relation to the linking *r*. The intrusive *r*, because it is a controversial element upon which agreement has not been reached by phoneticians, has been avoided. Other optional sounds or elisions are less systematically indicated because they are not used by all native speakers.

In conclusion it can be stated that 'this major new edition' of Daniel Jones' dictionary has met the demands of language development and language analysis placed on such a sensitive and hard-to-grasp notion as that of English pronunciation.

Ludmila Urbanová

